

a tea planter in the Nilgiris. The following extract from his letter will explain the specimens and the circumstances under which they were found:—

“April 13th 1905. I found rather a queer thing in the tea to-day and am sending you specimens. As you will see—if they arrive in decent condition—it consists of dried up termites stuck on tea shoots and the ends of stalks which have been plucked and on the edges of leaves. There were thousands of them on several bushes, all stuck by a darkish shiny liquid. My theory is that, owing to the excessive drought (this being the sixth month since we have had any rain), they came up to get liquid for purposes of their own—perhaps for nest building, and that the tea juice made them sick, and there they stayed until it dried and so got stuck. The tea has only just been tipped after a prune. They certainly did not try the tea as food, for the ground is covered with twigs. I cannot see any signs of the leaves or shoots having been bitten, so that they must have been upset directly they stuck their jaws in. Several, by the way, are fixed to the edges of leaves by their jaws. They were thickest on the points of buds, and in regular lumps on the ends of plucked shoots, and there were a good many scattered round the edges of leaves.”

Many insects, when attacked by disease, will climb up and attach themselves to the summit of growing plants before dying. But I have carefully examined these termites and can find no trace of fungal or bacterial disease. It is noticeable that they are all “soldiers,” and would therefore not have been occupied in nest building. It looks like a case of concerted suicide! I have never seen anything like it in this country.

E. ERNEST GREEN.

PERADENIYA, CEYLON, 19th May 1905.

No. IX.—SIZE OF SNAKES.

Last Friday night I killed a Phoorsa (*Echis carinata*) that was moving round the dinner table. As it appeared to me to be of unusual size, in fact by far the largest I had seen, I thought it as well to measure it and it proved to be exactly 2 feet 6 inches in length. It was a very handsomely marked specimen, having apparently recently sloughed its skin.

L. C. H. YOUNG.

ANDHERI, NEAR BOMBAY, 25th May 1905.

No. X.—A CONGREGATION OF HARRIERS.

What struck me as rather a curious sight, may be of interest to some of the many readers of this Journal. Whilst going through the Jeypore hills in the Vizagapatam District last February (the 13th to be exact), I was attracted by seeing numbers of these hawks flying in the same direction, past my camp, over the crest of an adjacent hill, where they all appeared to circle once or twice and then disappeared from view the other side. Curious to know the meaning of